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The Historical Context of the Reply to the Satraps Inscription (*IG* IV 556)

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Abstract: This article offers a new date and interpretation for *IG* IV 556, more commonly known as the Reply to the Satraps inscription. Most scholars associate it with the Common Peace of 362/1, and interpret it as a response to satraps seeking military aid against King Artaxerxes II during the Great Satraps Revolt. Yet the inscription contains no evidence that the satraps the inscription addresses were in rebellion. After consideration of its find location and potential authors, it better fits the historical context of the Common Peace imposed on Greece by Philip II of Macedon following his victory at the Battle of Chaeronea in 338.

Keywords: Ancient Near Eastern History, Classical Greek History, Political History/Political Culture

This article offers a new date and interpretation for *IG* IV 556, often called the Reply to the Satraps inscription.[1] The text of this document survives from two nineteenth-century copies, but the stele on which it was inscribed has unfortunately since been lost. It was discovered at Argos, but composed in Attic Greek. It records a response to an envoy from unidentified Persian satraps, the substance of which is that the Persians should refrain from interfering with a *koine eirene*, or Common Peace, recently established by the Greeks.[2]

1 For other editions and discussion of the text, see *CIG* 1118; *SIG*^{3} 182; Wilhelm (1900); De Sanctis (1934); Momigliano (1934), 494 498; Tod (1948), 145; Harding (1985), 57; Rhodes and Osborne (2003), 42; Kuhrt (2007), 70.

2 Common Peace agreements were multilateral treaties including most of the states of mainland Greece. They were based on the principle of autonomy, guaranteeing that all local governments should be free and independent. These terms distinguished them from the standard bilateral agreements such as the fifty year Peace of Nicias concluded by Athens and Sparta during the Peloponnesian War (Thuc. 5.13 24). Ryder (1965) remains the standard treatment of Common Peace agreements; see also Perlman (1985).

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1 [ ]νου φυγ[ ]
2 [μετ]έχουσιν τῆς κοινῆς [εἰρήνης. δηλ]
3 [ῶσαι δὲ τῶι παρὰ τ]ῶν σατραπῶν ἥκοντι διότ<ι> οἱ [Ἕλληνες πρ]
4 [εσβεύσ]αντες πρὸς ἀλλήλους διαλέλυνται τὰ <δ>[ιάφορα πρὸ]
5 [ς κ]οινὴν εἰρήνην, ὅπως ἀπαλλαγέντες τοῦ π[ρὸς αὐτοὺς πολ]
6 [έ]μου τὰς πόλεις ἕκαστοι τὰς αὑτῶν ὡς μ[εγίστας καὶ εὐδαίμον]
7 [α]ς ποιῶσιν, καὶ χρήσιμοι μένωσιν τοῖς φίλο[ις καὶ ἰσχυροί].
8 [Β]ασιλεῖ δὲ οὐδένα πόλεμον οἴδασιν ὄντα πρ[ὸς αὐτούς. ἐὰν ο]
9 ὖν ἡσυχίαν ἔχηι καὶ μὴ συνβάλληι τοὺς Ἕ[λληνας, μηδὲ τὴν ν]
10 [ῦν] γεγενημένην ἡμῖν εἰρήνην ἐπιχειρῆ[ι διαλύειν τέχνηι μ]
11 [ηδ]εμιᾶι μηδὲ μηχανῆι, ἕξομεν καὶ ἡμεῖς [ἡσυχίαν τὰ πρὸς Β]
12 [α]σιλέα. ἐὰν δὲ πολεμῆι πρός τινας τῶν [ὁμοσάντων τὸν ὅρκον ἢ χ]
13 [ρή]ματά τισι παρέχηι ἐπὶ διαλύσει τῆς εἰρή[νης τῆσδε, ἢ αὐ]
14 [τὸς] ἐναντίον τοῖς Ἕλλησιν τοῖς τήνδε [τὴν εἰρήνην ποήσα]
15 [σιν] ἢ ἄλλος τις τῶν ἐκ τῆς ἐκένου χώρ[ας, ἀμυνοῦμεν κοινῆι]
16 [πάντε]ς ἀξίως τῆς τε νῦν γεγενημένης ε[ἰρήνης καὶ ὧν πρὸ τ]
17 [οῦ ἐπράξα]μεν.

share in the common peace.
Show to the man who has come from the satraps that the Greeks have resolved their disputes towards a common peace, so that, being freed from the war against themselves, they may each make their own cities as great as possible and happy, and remain useful to their friends and strong. They are not aware that the King has any war against them. If, therefore, he keeps quiet and does not embroil the Greeks, and does not attempt to break up the peace that has come into being for us by any craft or contrivance, we too shall keep quiet in matters with regard to the King; but if he makes war on any who have sworn the oath or provides money for the breaking up of this peace, either himself in opposition to the Greeks who have made this peace or any one else of those from his territory, we shall all resist in com mon, worthily of the peace that has now come into being and of what we have done before now.[3]

The inscription can only be dated using circumstantial evidence. The antagonism it displays toward Persia means that it cannot be associated with the first Greek Common Peace of 387, otherwise known as the King's Peace or the Peace of Antalcidas. It also eliminates several attempts to renew this agreement between 375 and 367, all likewise put forward with the backing of King Artax-

3 Text and translation from Rhodes and Osborne (2003), 42.

erxes II.[4] Most scholars associate it with the Common Peace that followed the Battle of Mantinea in 362, an agreement struck without the input of the King by the leading states of Greece other than Sparta. As one of the most recent treatments notes, the majority of scholars believe that the inscription itself "is a response to satraps who are soliciting Greek support against the Persian King" in connection to the controversial Great Satraps' Revolt around the same time.[5]

Despite the current consensus, there are significant problems with dating the inscription to 362/1 that have not previously been addressed. In what follows, I argue that the inscription better fits the historical context of the Common Peace imposed on Greece by Philip II of Macedon following his victory at the Battle of Chaeronea in 338.[6] Rather than being evidence of the King's waning authority in the midst of a mid-fourth-century rebellion, the inscription represents an attempt by Philip to create a *casus belli* for his invasion of the Persian Empire and to stem the flow of Greek soldiers into Persian armies.

I The inscription, rebellion, and the King

In the traditional narrative of the Achaemenid Persian Empire, the fourth century BCE is often portrayed as a time of political unrest and decline.[7] This depiction has received substantial criticism in recent decades, but the incident which best illustrates the alleged instability, a rebellion of several Persian satraps in Asia Minor during the 360s known as the Great Satraps' Revolt, remains controversial. Revisionists argue that ancient sources such as Diodorus and Cornelius Nepos have exaggerated the severity of this event, which they view as merely a few localized and independent uprisings.[8] Traditionalists, meanwhile, continue to

4 In *CIG* 1118, Boeckh placed the inscription in 386, but Ryder (1965), 122 126 and Cawkwell (1981) offer compelling reasons why this is not possible.

5 Wilhelm (1900) first made the case for 362/1, and nearly all scholars have subsequently followed him. For further discussion of this consensus and the quoted text, see Rhodes and Osborne (2003), 42.

6 First suggested in a brief note by Koehler (1876), 15 n. 1, but to my knowledge not subsequently adopted by any scholars. Some have argued that the agreement in 338/7 was not a Common Peace, but see discussion in Buckler and Beck (2008), 246 252.

7 The standard traditional account is Olmstead (1948), xv, 411 424. For a recent critique, see Wiesehöfer (2007).

8 Weiskopf (1989); Briant (2002), 656 675; Waters (2014a), 190 191. For the controversy sur rounding the reliability of Diodorus and his reliance on contemporary fourth century historian Ephorus, Barber (1935), 17 48; Sacks (1990), (1994), 213 232; Stylianou (1998), 1 139; Green (2006), 7 47; Stronk (2017), 5 18. Moysey (1991) also points out that Cornelius Nepos may offer

understand it as a widespread and coordinated insurrection that posed great danger to King Artaxerxes II.[9]

The Reply to the Satraps inscription is a central piece of evidence in this ongoing debate. Advocates of the traditional view of the Satraps' Revolt, keen to find confirmation of their views in a contemporary text lacking the obvious problems of the most comprehensive extant historical narratives, associate it with the Common Peace of 362/1. In their interpretations the inscription is a response to a coordinated request by the rebellious satraps of western Anatolia for military aid—probably in the form of Greek mercenaries—against King Artaxerxes II.[10]

Revisionists have responded by dismissing the inscription's historical utility entirely. Pointing to the various dates that have been suggested by scholars, they argue that the numerous lacunae—including the entire preamble—render it impossible to date and therefore to draw meaningful conclusions from the now-lost stone.[11] Yet it is far too pessimistic to reject this particular document because of its fragmentary nature and over a few disagreements about its date among specialists, most of which occurred before the mid-twentieth century. Few ancient sources are without some shortcoming or controversy, and it is a rare epigraphic text that survives fully intact.

Such an approach is also unnecessary for the purposes of the revisionists' argument. The inscription's connection to the Great Satraps' Revolt, or any insurrection against the King for that matter, is at best tenuous. Although it is commonly accepted that the response is addressed to Persian rebels, the contents of the inscription reveal no evidence of a dispute between the King and his satraps.[12] In their eagerness to find physical and contemporary evidence of the Great Satraps' Revolt, the traditionalists have made several errant assumptions about the meaning and audience of the inscription.[13]

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further evidence of the revolt, but his account is hardly without its own problems. See Titchener (2003); Pryzwansky (2009).

9 Hornblower (1990), 363 365; Moysey (1992), 158 168; Debord (1999), 302 366; Cawkwell (2005), 188; Ruzicka (2012), 126 144.

10 Ryder (1965), 142 144; Hammond (1986), 511. Moysey (1991), 111 120; Hornblower (1994), 88 89.

11 Weiskopf (1989), 84 85; Briant (2002), 953; Kuhrt (2007), 70 n. 1 and 2.

12 Momigliano (1934), 495 argues that the statement forbidding interference from anyone else from the King's territory in line 15 is a reference the rebellious satraps. This is a questionable interpretation that fails to account for the autonomy afforded satraps on the Persian frontier. See discussion below.

13 Similarly dubious attempts have been made to find epigraphic evidence for the Satraps' Revolt in an Athenian decree honoring Orontes, one of the rebellion's leaders according to Diodorus. See Moysey (1987), and in particular his comment in n. 29, "the fact that Athens purchased grain from

As Beloch observed long ago, there is no reason to think that the ambassador addressed in the inscription was anything other than a representative of the King himself.[14] The document reflects standard diplomatic protocol in the Achaemenid Empire. Satraps were the King's front-line officials on the imperial border, and regularly conveyed letters to and from court, conducted negotiations for the King, and escorted his messengers.[15] They rarely ventured into Greece personally, almost always sending their own envoys instead.[16] It would hardly be irregular, let alone evidence of rebellion, for the Greeks to address a warning to the King to an official dispatched by his satraps.[17]

Moreover, it is of some significance that the inscription appears to refer to an individual envoy from more than one satrap. Rivalries between satraps sometimes led them to send separate ambassadors to Greece in an effort to gain control of negotiations, a ploy which could enhance their own status at the expense of their peers but also risked undermining the King's foreign policy.[18] It is somewhat difficult to imagine the rebel satraps coordinating a joint envoy to Greece, as their

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Orontes and honored him with citizenship and a gold crown does not imply that Orontes was in revolt." Elsewhere, Moysey (1989) also cautions against relying too heavily on scattered numismatic evidence for the Satraps Revolt.

14 Beloch (1922), 535 n. 1, and supported by De Sanctis (1934), 152–153. This observation, however, has been ignored by most scholars or rejected without justification, e.g., Tod (1948), 145.

15 Briant (2002), 344–345; Waters (2014a), 100–103. See also the comments regarding the mechanisms of Persian diplomacy, especially the role of satraps in negotiations, scattered throughout Badian (1987). For an overview of satrapal responsibilities, see Hornblower (1994), 50–64; Debord (1999), 19–82; Dusinberre (2013), 32–113.

16 To my knowledge, the only instance in which a satrap visited Greece on a diplomatic mission took place in 393, when Pharnabazus sailed to Corinth at the head of an allied Persian–Athenian fleet in order to confirm a Persian alliance with Athens, Corinth, Argos, and Thebes (Xen. *Hell.* 4.8.6–9).

17 While this article often describes the representative of the satraps using terms that connote a formal appointment (e.g., envoy or ambassador), it is worth cautioning that the extant text of the inscription does not indicate whether the individual was present in an official or unofficial capacity. As Herman (1987), 130–161 argues, the use of private *xenia* networks (in addition to its closely related, more formalized cousin *proxenia*) to conduct political services such as diplomacy often blurs this distinction. Mitchell (1997), 131 observes that "interstate relations and diplomatic activity with Persians took place by and large on a personal and individual level" founded on *xenia* and *philia* relationships. Brosius (2012), 157–159 comments on the propensity of the King to use informal mediators to carry out diplomacy when necessary. Whatever the individual's official status in this case, the inscription's author(s) clearly viewed him as representing the King and the satraps, and so it is appropriate to refer to him as such.

18 The classic example of this took place in 413, when King Darius II ordered his western satraps, Pharnabazus and Tissaphernes, to aid Sparta in its war against Athens. Rather than collaborate, each satrap sent his own delegation to strike an accord with Sparta (Thuc. 8.6). For more on this

alliance quickly fell prey to betrayal and internal conflict even in the traditional narrative of the Great Satraps' Revolt.[19]

The contents of the inscription do not, then, support the conventional belief that its audience was a group of rebellious satraps in the late 360s. To the contrary, the language of the text is exactly the response we would expect to an embassy sent by loyal satraps acting on behalf of a Persian monarch. Its most straightforward interpretation is that the Greeks, having agreed to a Common Peace with one another and being at peace with Persia, ordered the envoy to warn the satraps and the King against undermining their agreement on penalty of war.

II The inscription at Argos

The letter recorded on the inscription is ostensibly addressed to the King by way of an envoy from the satraps, but the inscription itself was published at Argos. This is, of course, a place no Achaemenid monarch had ever visited in the past or would have been expected to visit in the fourth century at any time, but which did have a history of Medism going back to the Persian Wars.[20] The audience for the inscribed copy of the letter therefore was not the King, but the inhabitants of Argos and any Greek who passed through. As the inscription could not have been published without the approval of the Argive government, its date must correspond to a time when Argos would have benefitted from the King staying out of Greek affairs.

Throughout much of the fifth and fourth centuries, one principle concern dominated Argive foreign policy: the containment of Sparta, its longest, most dangerous, and most hated rival. Accordingly, in 362 Argos aligned itself with Thebes and against Athens and Sparta at the Battle of Mantinea. The subsequent Common Peace was agreed upon by every major Greek power except for the Spartans, who refused to sign because doing so would have formally acknowl-

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and comments on other satrapal rivalries, see Westlake (1981); Hornblower (1982), 150 152; Debord (1999), 94 95; Briant (2002), 594; Hyland (2008).

19 See, for example, Hornblower (1994), 86 87. We should take care not to overstate the value of this point, but the sort of unity demonstrated by a joint envoy from the satraps better fits the period of the Common Peace of 338/7, after which officials from all over Anatolia mounted a unified resistance against the Macedonians, and even later satraps from as far away as Cilicia resisted Alexander shortly after his crossing at the Granicus. Among their soldiers were, according to ancient sources who have obviously exaggerated to some degree, as many as 30,000 Greeks (Diod. Sic. 17.18 19; Arr. *Anab*. 1.12 16, 2.4).

20 Tomlinson (1972), 96 100; Waters (2014b).

edged the independent status of another signatory, the Messenians.[21] Freed from Spartan rule by the Thebans only a few years earlier, the exploitation of Messenia had been an important foundation of the centuries-long Spartan domination of the Peloponnese.[22]

This Common Peace was apparently concluded without any active involvement from Persia. Still it is difficult to imagine either Thebes or Argos agreeing to an interpretation of the Peace that forbade any involvement with the King, whose support had played a decisive role in several Greek conflicts over the preceding decades. The Thebans had only recently won the favor of the King at the expense of the Spartans, and can hardly have foresworn it after the indecisive battle at Mantinea. The Argives had benefitted from the Theban destruction of Spartan military and political power since the Battle of Leuctra in 371, and it is similarly doubtful that they would have desired that their allies end all coordination with Persia. For both states accepting an agreement that made Sparta the only possible Greek ally of the King seems like the least advantageous course of action possible.[23]

While we have limited information about the political affairs of Argos after 362, what we do know offers no indication that the Argives deviated significantly over the next two decades.[24] They supported Thebes during the Third Sacred War of the 350s,[25] and in 343 they and the Thebans both sent soldiers to aid the King's successful conquest of Egypt.[26] It is of course impossible to rule out a brief window at the end of the 360s, or perhaps very early in the 350s, when the Argives adopted an explicitly anti-Persian and perhaps an anti-Theban stance; in the absence of any supporting evidence, however, this seems highly implausible.[27]

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21 Diod. Sic. 15.66 67.1.

22 For background on the rivalry of Argos and Sparta, see Tomlinson (1972); Kelly (1976), 136 141; McQueen (1978), 41 45. For Spartan historical dominance of Messenia and the Peloponnese, Kennell (2010), 39 53.

23 On Persian involvement in Greek politics, see Cawkwell (2005). On the history of Thebes in the fourth century, Munn (1997); Buckler and Beck (2008).

24 Tomlinson (1972), 143 145.

25 Diod. Sic. 16.39.

26 Notably, the Egyptians employed Spartan soldiers during this campaign, and had also hired Spartans and Athenians to stymie earlier Persian invasions in 360 and 351. Xen. *Ages.* 2.28 31; Diod. Sic. 16.44 49; 15.90 93, 16.48.2.

27 Significantly, Argos is absent from a defensive alliance Athens signed in 362/1, probably just after the Common Peace, with four other Peloponnesian states. This coalition included Phlius, which like Argos had fought as an ally of Thebes at Mantinea the year before. Had Argos also decided to switch sides, it would be reasonable to expect their participation in the agreement, too. Rhodes and Osborne (2003), 41.

It is also worth noting that, while ancient sources do not give the Persians any role in the Common Peace of 362/1, neither do they suggest that Artaxerxes II or his satraps opposed it. In fact, it is possible that the King supported the Peace as a means of advancing the interests of Thebes, the city-state to which he had thrown his support only five years earlier. The agreement meant that most of Greece recognized Messene as an independent state rather than a Spartan territory, a goal Thebes had also pursued in the failed Peace of 367. And, thanks to the Peace of 362/1, the Spartans were unable to call upon the allies who had fought on their side at the Battle of Mantinea when the Thebans sent an army into the Peloponnese to attack Sparta in 361.[28]

The same difficulty in explaining why the Argives would cosign and publish an anti-Persian interpretation of the Common Peace of 362/1—and why the King might seek to undermine the agreement—does not exist for the Common Peace of 338/7. Philip had sent military support to Argos in its struggle with Sparta as early as 348. He did so again in 344, prompting a counter-mission from Demosthenes that provoked the Argives to send ambassadors to scold the Athenians for their pro-Spartan sympathies. The next year, Demosthenes complained of Philip's influence in the Peloponnese, and Argos dispatched military support to Elis to install a pro-Macedonian faction in power.[29]

Clearly, Philip had replaced the Thebans as the most important ally of the Argives by the time of the Battle of Chaeronea in 338, explaining their lack of support for the Greek allies there. They were rewarded handsomely for this decision. Philip handed territory seized from Sparta to Argos in the aftermath of Chaeronea, and the Common Peace he subsequently imposed further isolated Sparta from potential Greek allies.[30] With a few possible if relatively minor exceptions, the Argives remained loyal to Macedon until the death of Alexander in 323.[31] Perhaps it was also inscribed elsewhere, but it can hardly be a surprise that

28 Ryder (1965), 80 85. For the failed Peace of 367, Xen. *Hell.* 7.1.39 40; for the Peace of 362, Diod. Sic. 15.89.1 2.

29 For discussion and references, McQueen (1978), 42.

30 Diod. Sic. 17.29.3, 48.1 2; Arr. *Anab.* 2.13 14. Roebuck (1948), 84 89.

31 Tomlinson (1972), 144 149. McQueen (1978), 44 45 argues that the Argives were not entirely supportive of Macedonian interests during this period. This is certainly possible, but none of the three episodes he cites in support is unobjectionable. The first is the Argive decision to join an alliance with Athens, Messenia, and Megalopolis in 342, which he interprets as anti Macedonian on the basis of Athens' increasingly anti Philip positions. At this time, however, Athens was not at war with Macedon, and as McQueen acknowledges, "her new allies did not break off their existing friendship with Macedonia." There is, furthermore, no evidence that Philip actually requested their aid, which, as Roebuck (1948), 76 observed, they would have been constrained from sending since Corinth and Megara controlled the Isthmus. Second, he suggests that the Argive decision to

our lone extant copy of the Reply to the Satraps inscription was discovered in the territory of one of the most consistent and enthusiastic supporters of Macedon in all of Greece.

III The authorship of the inscription

In addition to the Common Peace, Philip also created the League of Corinth to formalize his hegemony over Greece.[32] Soon after its establishment, the League *synedrion* elected Philip as its *hegemon* and appointed him to lead a war against Persia. Of course, Philip was only able to send a preliminary force to Anatolia prior to his assassination in 336. After his death, his son Alexander took over leadership in the League and of the war against the King.

In the League of Corinth Philip's settlement created the only fourth century entity that could have authored the letter on the inscription.[33] After all, the Reply to the Satraps is not a record of the Common Peace itself, but of a decree referencing the Peace that was promulgated by a self-proclaimed panhellenic organization in response to an envoy from Persia. Recognition of the need for such an institution led Hammond to presuppose that, as part of the Common Peace of 362/1, the Greeks must have also formed what he called the "League of City-States." Consisting of "a congress of delegates, with one vote to each state," this formal League Charter, he imagined, must have also required states to meet regularly to deliberate, and included a federal court for resolving internal disputes as well as a federal treasury.[34]

Yet there is no other evidence that the Common Peace of 362/1—or any of the similar treaties before it—spawned an international governing body of this sort.[35]

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send soldiers to aid the Persian conquest of Egypt in 343/2 was contrary to Macedonian interests. This position assumes, perhaps on the basis of later events, that Philip was already opposed to Persia in 343; not only is there no evidence for this at that time, but the Thebans, another ally of Philip, also sent soldiers on the same campaign. Finally, he cites two statements from Diodorus, who claims that the Argives made a move toward independence in 336 and that the Thebans appealed to them for help against Alexander in 335 (17.3.5, 8.3 6). Yet Diodorus does not provide any explanation about what this move toward independence entailed, and he also makes it clear that the appeal to Argos failed.

32 Larsen (1926), 59 60 describes clearly how Philip designed the League to suit his foreign policy aims.

33 Beloch (1922), 535 n. 1.

34 Hammond (1986), 511 512.

35 Ryder (1965), 141 notes that many believe a formal military alliance was part of the treaty, and Diod. Sic. 15.89.1 does call the agreement a κοινὴν εἰρήνην καὶ συμμαχίαν, but this does not

The creation of any such entity seems especially unlikely in light of the continued existence of the Second Athenian League, and of two inscriptions detailing the establishment of mutual defense pacts between Athens and several other states within a year of the Common Peace of 362/1.[36] Joining with the rest of the Greeks in a federal panhellenic "League of City-States" would have rendered both the Athenian League and these more limited bi- and multilateral defensive military pacts unnecessary. Indeed, when Philip established the League of Corinth he also dissolved the Second Athenian League, and, not coincidentally, there are no records of other military alliances between Athens and Greek states until the death of Alexander in 323.[37]

It may be tempting to suppose that the Second Athenian League itself could have composed the inscription.[38] There are two points in favor of this proposition, namely that the League included a *synedrion* of representatives from many Greek states and the inscription is composed in Attic. However, the Second Athenian League was not panhellenic, and there is no evidence that it ever purported to speak for all Greeks, especially in the aftermath of Mantinea in 362.[39] And, while some have argued that the Attic dialect of the inscription means that it must have

necessitate the creation of a governing body capable of deciding on foreign policy and issuing such a decree as the inscription records. It could simply be that Diodorus is referring to a general principle encapsulated in many Common Peace agreements, namely that all signatories were bound to wage war against any state that broke the terms of the Peace. See comments by Perlman (1985), 160 163.

36 Rhodes and Osborne (2003), 41 and 44.

37 Pausanias 1.25.3. Schwenk (1997), 33 35 notes that the Athenians maintained diplomatic relations through honorary decrees and grants of citizenship, even as the League of Corinth rendered them unable to pursue their own independent foreign policy. Following this logic, any envoy from the Persians to an individual Greek state could be (and, as I argue below, was) portrayed by Philip as an illegitimate usurpation of the League's collective monopoly on foreign affairs, an attempt to undermine the Common Peace of 338/7, and therefore as a legal pretext for war against Persia.

38 Proposed by De Sanctis (1934), 154 155 and echoed by Momigliano (1934), 496 498, who argued that the inscription should be dated to 371/0. In addition to the issues outlined in the rest of this paragraph, Momigliano's interpretation requires him to move the start of the Great Satraps' Revolt to the late 370s and to speculate, without any other evidence, that Argos must have briefly joined the Second Athenian League at this time.

39 In Rhodes and Osborne (2003), 23 and 24 the Athenians reference the League in inscriptions as consisting of the Athenians and their allies, not collectively as the Greeks. In 41 and 44, they make no mention of their League allies. See also 31, in which the League is simply co identified as the Athenians and their actions are described as being done on behalf of the freedom of the Greeks. The Thebans, meanwhile, are not a possible source for this inscription because, as Buckler and Beck (2008), 165 179 demonstrate, they never created a federal organization to formalize their hegemony.

originated from Athens, in fact the use of Attic and its closely related Ionic script became increasingly commonplace in international Greek inscriptions throughout the fourth century.[40] Notably, the inscription recording the Common Peace of 338/7 imposed by Philip II on the Greeks—discussed in the following section—is also written in Attic-Ionic.[41]

IV The inscription and Philip's war against Persia

Thus far I have identified three reasons to associate the Reply to the Satraps inscription with the Common Peace of 338/7 instead of the Peace of 362/1. First, the later date allows a more straightforward interpretation of the text, which reflects the ordinary workings of Persian diplomacy and contains no references to a rebellion against the King. Second, it better suits the find context in Argos, a city-state that had good reason to be more sympathetic to the inscription's anti-Persian sentiments under Macedonian rule in the 330s than under the Theban hegemony of the 360s. Third, it offers the only plausible author for the inscription. Unlike the Second Athenian Confederacy, Philip's League of Corinth could legitimately claim to speak on behalf of the Greeks, and, unlike the "League of City-States" imagined by Hammond, there is corroborating evidence for its existence.[42]

Despite these advantages, the 338/7 date has not been advanced as a possibility since Koehler first suggested it in 1876.[43] The reason is likely that this later date seems unworkable *prima facie* because of the subsequent Macedonian invasion of

40 Beloch (1922), 535 n. 1 speculated that the stone had been moved from Athens to Argos; Momigliano (1934) and De Sanctis (1934), 154 155 each argued that it was a decree of Second Athenian League; Charneux (1983), 251 n. 3 suggested it was a letter from Athens; others, e.g., Buck (1913), 158 159 and Tod (1948), 145, have simply stated that Athens must have played a leading role in its composition. If the inscription did indeed originate in Athens in the aftermath of Mantinea, the absence of Argos from the Athenian alliance with four Peloponnesian states in 362/1 is all the more glaring (mentioned above in n. 27). Moreover, McLean (2002), 40 41 points out that Attic Ionic increasingly became the favored script for inscriptions with an international audience in fourth century Greece, and so it should be no surprise that it was the dialect of choice for a Macedonian letter circulated to a Greek audience.

41 The Common Peace of 338, its renewal under Alexander in 335, and an honorary decree of the Macedonian controlled Delphic Amphictyony in 337 were also written in Attic Ionic. See Harding (1985), 102; Rhodes and Osborne (2003), 76 and 80.

42 Ironically, Hammond (1986), 572 also observed the similarities between the League of Corinth and his own proposed "League of City States," the key difference being that the latter did not have a leader and did not accomplish anything.

43 Koehler (1876), 15 n. 1.

Persia. Ryder, for instance, eliminated it as a possibility because "in 338/337 the conclusion of a Common Peace treaty was followed very closely by the decision of the Greeks to take part in a general war with Philip of Macedon against the Persians."[44] In other words, how could the Greeks states of the League of Corinth claim that a state of peace existed between themselves and the King to a Persian envoy on the eve of the League-approved Macedonian invasion of the Empire?

The answer to this question can be found in the details of Philip's settlement of Greece. Although Diodorus presents the agreement of a Common Peace, the creation of League of Corinth, and the declaration of war against Persia as simultaneous events, most scholars prefer the relative chronology offered by Justin.[45] After his victory at Chaeronea, Philip initially negotiated bilateral terms of surrender with the individual city-states that had resisted him. He then invited Greeks from all over the mainland to Corinth, where the Common Peace and the League of Corinth were proposed and ratified. The League *synedrion* formally met for the first time at a still later date when it appointed Philip as *hegemon* for a war against Persia.[46]

That there was a gap of time between the approval of the Common Peace and the League's decision to formally declare war against Persia is supported by an inscribed copy of the Peace from Athens.[47] In addition to the standard provisions

44 Ryder (1965), 144 145. The quote continues with a second, far less compelling argument, namely that "it would have been hard for the Greeks at this time, however well disposed towards Philip, to have spoken of themselves as having settled their differences by sending embassies to one another." Yet the Common Peace imposed by Philip did end conflicts between its signatories, and the Greeks themselves must have sent embassies to one another to discuss the arrangements before sending delegates to the international congress that ratified the Peace. It is not clear how the process for negotiating and finalizing this treaty differed from that of previous Common Peace agreements, including the Peace of 362 (Diod. Sic. 15.89.1 2).

45 Diod. Sic. 16.89.1 3; Plut. *Phoc*. 16.4 5; Just. *Epit*. 9.5. On the problems with the account of Diodorus, see Tod (1948), 177; Ryder (1965), 154.

46 Hammond (1986), 571 572 proposes that a first conference took place in late autumn of 338 when Philip's proposals for the Peace and League were circulated. A second then occurred in spring 337,when they were ratified. He places the first formal meeting of the League in summer 337. Alternatively, Tod (1948), 177 argues that Philip first convened the Greeks in winter 338/7, when they approved the Common Peace and the League of Corinth, of which Philip was appointed *hegemon* at a later date. Ryder (1965), 151 162; Ellis (1994), 782 785; Harris (1995), 135; Rhodes and Osborne (2003), 76; Buckler and Beck (2008), 252; Worthington (2014), 97 103 offer more compressed timelines, but agree that the Peace and League were ratified at an earlier date than Philip's election as *hegemon* for war against Persia.

47 The text of this inscription is poorly preserved and requires heavy restoration. *IG* II^2 236; Tod (1948), 177; Harding (1985), 99; Rhodes and Osborne (2003), 76. See also discussion by Ryder (1965), 150 162; Buckler and Beck (2008), 247 251.

of a Common Peace, this treaty includes an affirmation of a previous agreement with Philip and an oath not to overthrow his dynasty or kingdom in Macedon. It also describes the mechanism by which collective military action in response to threats to the Peace would be undertaken, namely at the discretion of the *hegemon* and with the approval of the *synedrion*.[48] Significantly, the inscription does not indicate a state of war existed at that time between the League and Persia or any other foreign power, and it does not identify Philip as the *hegemon*.

The statements made in the Reply to the Satraps inscription were therefore technically true in the narrow window of time prior to the League's approval of war against Persia, and so it should be dated to this period. Of course, Philip's intention to attack Persia was likely obvious to all prior to this formal declaration, and the Persians had been cognizant of the Macedonian threat at least since their intervention at Perinthus and Byzantium in 340.[49] The King and his satraps would not have waited for an official decision by the *synedrion* to begin their work undermining the nascent League of Corinth and preparing to resist the inevitable Macedonian invasion force.

The main tool they used was bribery, the same that had confirmed friendly and undermined hostile Greek regimes to great effect in the past.[50] Persian agents circulated money throughout Greece, securing support from sympathetic and influential politicians such as Demosthenes in Athens.[51] Open warfare against Macedon was untenable in the immediate aftermath of Chaeronea, but these individuals could still use their networks and Persian money to privately supply the satraps with soldiers. Indeed, they are likely the source for Greeks who fought against the Macedonian vanguard in 337/6 and, in even greater numbers, against Alexander in 334.[52] In the meantime, anti-Macedonian factions

48 Similar observations made by Perlman (1985), 169 171.

49 Hornblower (1994), 95 96; Cawkwell (2005), 200 204.

50 Lewis (1989); Mitchell (1997), 111 133; Schepens (2012).

51 Such efforts are of course difficult to track in the sources, especially since ancient orators often accused each other of accepting bribes on questionable grounds. Still, Persian money undoubtedly arrived in Greece, perhaps as early as the mission of Ephialtes to Persia in 341. For comments regarding bribes, especially of Demosthenes, see Aeschin. 3.238 240; Din. 1.10, 18 20, 24 26; Plut. *Mor*. 847f, 848e and *Dem*. 14.2, 20.4 5. For further discussion, Cawkwell (1963), 204; Lewis (1989), 233; Mitchell (1997), 130; Worthington (2013), 224, 279 283.

52 Parke (1933), 177 185. While no account mentions Athenians at the Granicus, they probably made up a significant proportion of the Greek troops in Asia. In the aftermath of the battle, Arrian states that the Greek soldiers taken prisoner were sentenced to labor camps for violating the κοινῇ δόξαντα τοῖς Ἕλλησιν by fighting for the Persians (*Anab*. 1.16.6). Arrian later reports that the Athenians sent several embassies to Alexander requesting the release of their citizens from these camps (1.29.5 6; 3.5.1, 6.2; see also Curt. 4.8.12). Several other Athenians are known

in Greece knew that Persian support would be forthcoming once an opportunity for action presented itself. The assassination of Philip in 336 was one such opportunity, and accordingly prompted many Greeks states to rebel against Alexander. Diodorus reports that the Thebans, the most strident of the rebels, even called upon the rest of the Greeks to join together with them and the King in their doomed struggle.[53]

By telegraphing his intentions before openly declaring war, Philip provoked Darius III into taking precisely the steps that both the Common Peace inscription and the Reply to the Satraps inscription identify as acts justifying a military response. Indeed, the inscription notes that their intention to keep the existing state of peace between the Greeks and the King is conditional, and would be observed only so long as he refrains from working to undermine it in any way. It takes little imagination to think of how standard diplomatic activity between Persia and individual Greek states—such as that which occasioned the inscription itself—could be characterized as an attempt to subvert the Common Peace and League of Corinth. Thus the Reply to the Satraps inscription was not only a warning against any ongoing political and military collaboration between Persia and the Greeks, it also was part of a Macedonian propaganda campaigned designed to create a *casus belli* that portrayed Philip's invasion as a response to Persian hostility.

This was not the first time that Philip had launched or provoked a war of conquest under specious pretenses or on legal technicalities. His dealings with Athens regarding the negotiation, ratification, and collapse of the Peace of Philocrates illustrate a similarly cynical provocation of war.[54] When it came time to rouse the League of Corinth against Persia, Diodorus reports that Philip's stated

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to have joined the Persian resistance against Alexander, including Charidemus (Diod. Sic. 17.30; Curt. 3.2.10), Iphicrates the Younger (Curt. 3.13.15; Arr. *Anab*. 2.15.2), and at Halicarnassus both Ephialtes and Thrasybulus (Diod. Sic. 17.25.6 27.5). Memnon of Rhodes, the highest ranking Greek to resist Philip and Alexander, probably played a role in recruiting many of these soldiers from Athens. Charidemus, Ephialtes, and Thrasybulus all served at one time or another with him, and Rhodes and Osborne (2003), 98 records a decree made by the city in honor of his son or nephew in 327/6.

53 Diod. Sic. 17.3 9.6.

54 Hammond (1986), 556 567, 574, comments that Philip "employed duplicity and bribery, as his contemporaries did, and he employed them more successfully." See also Ellis (1994), 760 779; Heskel (1997), 184 185; Schwenk (1997), 28 30; Worthington (2014), 72 82. The Athenians, and Demosthenes in particular, were not at all innocent in the failure of the Peace, either. Cawkwell (1963); Trevett (1999), 194 199; Mader (2006). Buckler and Beck (2008), 242 note Philip's specious justifications for war against Perinthus and Byzantium.

aim was to avenge the invasion of Xerxes in 480/79.[55] For the Greeks who had only submitted to Macedon out of compulsion and who had sought Persian aid in their efforts to remain independent, this could scarcely have been a convincing rationale.[56]

Philip made his case much more compelling by creating a contemporary legal pretext. Thus ongoing Persian diplomatic actions were characterized—probably even correctly—as efforts to undermine the Common Peace of 338/7. Shortly thereafter this prohibition was reiterated in a letter delivered to a Persian envoy, specifically warning the King and his agents that their behavior was illegal and, if it persisted, would be cause for war. As it later officially sanctioned Philip's invasion of Persia, the League of Corinth was the most appropriate body for issuing this ultimatum, which, of course, was then inscribed in stone and set up on display in Argos. In short, the Reply to the Satraps inscription was part of carefully choreographed settlement of Greece designed by Philip to manufacture a cause for invading Persia. More than merely a quest for panhellenic vengeance for the Greeks, he arranged it so that the war was a legal obligation for the member states of the League of Corinth.

It is not a coincidence that Alexander rationalized his own invasion of Persia on very similar grounds.[57] According to a letter he sent to King Darius III after the Battle of Issus in 333, the war was revenge for the destruction wrought by Xerxes and his armies during their unprovoked invasions of 480/79. Alexander's letter goes on to cite more contemporary justifications, namely that the Persians had sent soldiers into Macedonian territory, supported Greek rebels against Macedon, assassinated his father, and sent agents to Greece in an attempt to turn them against Macedon with false information and gold.[58]

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55 Diod. Sic. 16.89.2. As the foregoing discussion makes clear, most scholars follow Just. *Epit*. 9.5, who states that Philip did not openly call for war against Persia until after the establishment of the League and the Common Peace.

56 Analyzing the Philip's immediate political motives for declaring war on Persia, Brosius (2003), 237 rightly concludes that "Philip's Persian war had nothing to do with revenge for Xerxes' invasion, or with the 'liberation of the Greeks of Asia.' As for the Greeks, they were forced by Philip to agree to a war against an enemy who had only just been identified by them as an ally … the reason why Philip wanted a Persian war was to keep Persia out of Greek politics." It hardly needs stating that the Reply to the Satraps inscription closely aligns with this goal by warning the King and his agents to remain out of Greek affairs.

57 Alexander had renewed the agreements that Philip had concluded with the Greeks (Diod. Sic. 17.4.9; Arr. *Anab*. 1.1.1 2). Tod (1948), 183; Hammond (1986), 596 601.

58 Arr. *Anab*. 2.14. It is true that there is no direct mention here of emissaries from the satraps or the King to undermine Philip, but this could be explained by the different context: whereas the sort of activity warned against in the Reply to Satraps inscription gave Philip the necessary legal

If Philip did indeed also cite more contemporary justifications for his invasion, however, why do ancient sources only report that his stated aims were to avenge the Greeks for the Persian campaigns in the fifth century and to liberate the Greeks of Asia? It may be because our sources for these events, Diodorus, Plutarch, and Justin, all wrote no earlier than the first century BCE. Philip's legal case for war turned on whether Persian behavior truly constituted a violation of the Common Peace or a threat to the League of Corinth. These technical minutiae would likely not have been included because they were not of great interest centuries after the war,[59] especially to audiences and authors more inclined to accept Philip's framing of the invasion as a panhellenic endeavor on behalf of the Greeks.[60]

In any case, the importance of Philip's and later Alexander's propaganda efforts should not be understated. Macedon's ultimate triumph was hardly a foregone conclusion, and collaboration between the King and sympathetic Greeks

argument to convince the League members to declare war, here Alexander is simply justifying his invasion to Darius III. In this case, he is able to cite, even if speciously, wars (campaigns at Perinthus and in Thrace) and violence (assassination) undertaken against Philip by Artaxerxes III. Diplomatic machinations pale in comparison and from a rhetorical perspective were perhaps better left to justify Alexander's own attacks against Darius III, who had played no part in these earlier acts of aggression.

59 A similar dynamic can be witnessed in the Biblical apologia for King David of Israel: whereas the near contemporary historical account of Samuel acknowledges and apologizes for unsavory behavior by David and his successor Solomon, the much later account of Chronicles offers a far more sanitized and almost hagiographic narrative. As Halpern (2001), 101 explains, "it is inconceivable that the alibis of Samuel could have been written much after David's day. A hundred years later, Amasa, Abner, Shimei would not only have been lost to living memory, but almost surely devoid of political resonance. The justification of Joab's execution would no longer have been necessary at all (and Chronicles omits the whole episode of Adonijah and its consequences)." For Philip's invasion, we have only the later authors, and so the concerns they address do not include those of contemporary audiences, such as the members of the League of Corinth, who one might imagine would have preferred to vote for war on legal rather than moral or purportedly patriotic grounds.

60 Even if these authors used more contemporary sources, they nevertheless chose what information to include and omit from their own narratives. For Diodorus in particular, see references in n. 8 above. Additionally, as Stronk (2017), 540 argues, "Diodorus' account appears to merge Greek traditions, whether these were based upon facts or on propaganda, Achaemenid ideology, and his Stoic belief augmented by elements typical of the period of the late Republic at Rome, the very period Diodorus lived in and the very place where he wrote most of his work." Similarly, the observation by Morgan (2016), 283 about Alexander certainly also applies to Philip: "It is difficult to see Alexander's motives clearly, as they are hidden behind the agendas of Roman authors … the presentation of his victory and subsequent behavior by Plutarch, Arrian, and others bears the mark of hindsight and the interests and mores of a much later, elite, Roman audience."

was its greatest threat. The Reply to the Satraps inscription helped Philip build a legal pretext for declaring war on Persia, and served as a warning against collaboration to wavering member states of the League of Corinth. Far from being evidence of a widespread rebellion that endangered the central authority of the King, the inscription illustrates the danger that the Persian Empire posed to Philip on the eve of its destruction, even after the establishment of Macedonian hegemony over Greece.

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